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Licensing

Threading Building Blocks FAQ

- **General Questions about TBB**
- **Licensing**
- **Using TBB**
- **Reporting Issues with TBB**
- **Contributing to TBB**

Contents[hide]

How is TBB licensed? [edit]

TBB is dual-licensed, with a commercial (COM) license and a GPL v2-based open source (OSS) license. Please pay close attention to the usage restrictions each license uses to make sure you are using the proper version.

What is the COM license and what does it offer? [edit]

One year of technical support and product updates. For more information about the COM license please refer to the licensing agreement section at www.threadingbuildingblocks.com .

In addition, there is a free evaluation (30-days of support and updates) license available from the commercial website. Although we used to offer a free non-commercial version of TBB that license type is no longer available due to the availability of

OSS TBB.

What is the OSS license and what does it offer? [edit]

TBB is available under the common OSS license GPL v2 with the libstdC++ Runtime Exception. This is the same license used for a variety of well-known OSS applications including MySQL, NetBeans, and the Linux kernel.

Why is TBB licensed under GPL v2 with the libstdC++ Runtime Exception? [edit]

Because GPL v2, and the libstdC++ Runtime Exception, are frequently used in the open source community and they are widely accepted and well understood. For complete descriptions please visit the official GNU website for GPL v2 and the Runtime Exception .

Although GPL v3 was considered for the OSS license of TBB it was not available at the time the product was open-sourced.

What is dual-licensing? [edit]

Wikipedia offers a description of dual-licensing for software, "Dual-licensing is the practice of distributing software under two different sets of terms and conditions." The articles later states, "When software is dual-licensed, recipients can choose which terms they want to use or distribute the software under." This is true of the dual-licensing used by TBB.

Although TBB is dual-licensed, both the COM and OSS versions are derived from the exact same code base (source and/or binaries).

Why does TBB use dual-licensing? [edit]

Some users of TBB want or require a COM license. Who are these users and why might they require this license type?

- Commercial customers often want or require certain aspects particular to the COM license type. Some of these items might include guaranteed and private support services, product updates, or other provisions of COM license. The COM license is available only for those versions of TBB that have validated and

supported binaries for a limited number of platforms. This means that those versions are the most stable and most tested releases. In conjunction with each COM release of TBB we also release the same source code and binaries via the OSS commercial-aligned releases.

- Some other Intel COM software products (e.g. Intel® Compiler Professional Editions, Intel® Parallel Studio, etc.) are used by COM users of TBB. Some of those products include COM licenses for TBB and therefore many users of TBB are most comfortable using the version of TBB they acquired through a COM product bundle.

Some users of TBB want or require OSS licenses. Who are these users and why might they require this license type?

- Open-source customers often want or require certain aspects particular to the OSS license type. Some of these items might include the very latest developer updates, free access to the source code, or other provisions of OSS license.

What are the ramifications of dual-licensing? [edit]

Users of TBB can get the same exact code as any TBB COM release (same code base, same binaries) under either the COM or OSS license.

More frequent releases are available under the OSS license (stable releases, with source code and validated binaries; or development releases, with source code, but no binaries).

COM or OSS users of TBB can use the contribution process on threadingbuildingblocks.org to make changes to TBB.

What is the contribution process? [edit]

To learn more about TBB's contribution process please refer to the contribution section of threadingbuildingblocks.org here .

Why is there a contribution process? [edit]

In order for TBB to be released under multiple licenses, with COM being one of them, Intel must

maintain rights to the code base.

For Intel to maintain rights to the code base it needs to dual-license, contributors to the TBB project must contribute their code and explicitly agree to the contribution terms in order to properly assign these rights to Intel.

When you contribute you don't lose rights to your code (we give them right back to you!), but you give us enough rights that we can make the outbound dual-licensing work. MySQL and other GPL v2 users work the same way.

The best way to make changes to TBB is to contribute them. That way they get into the main source base for TBB and will be included and tested in all future releases.

Which license is right for my needs? [edit]

TBB is available commercially as a binary distribution, and in open source in both source and binary forms. If you need commercial support services you should purchase either a standalone commercial license or take advantage of the considerable value in purchasing the Intel® Parallel Studio or Intel® Compiler Professional Edition . If your legal counsel is comfortable with your use of software under the Intel TBB open source license, GPL v2 with the Runtime Exception, and you do not require commercial support services, please download the latest version of open source TBB here . Finally, if you require the ability to modify or distribute the commercial source code of TBB, contact your Intel representative for more information.

When built from source, TBB is intended to be highly portable, and so it supports a wide variety of operating systems and platforms. Binary distributions, including commercial distributions, are validated and officially supported for only certain hardware and software platforms, operating systems, and compilers.

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